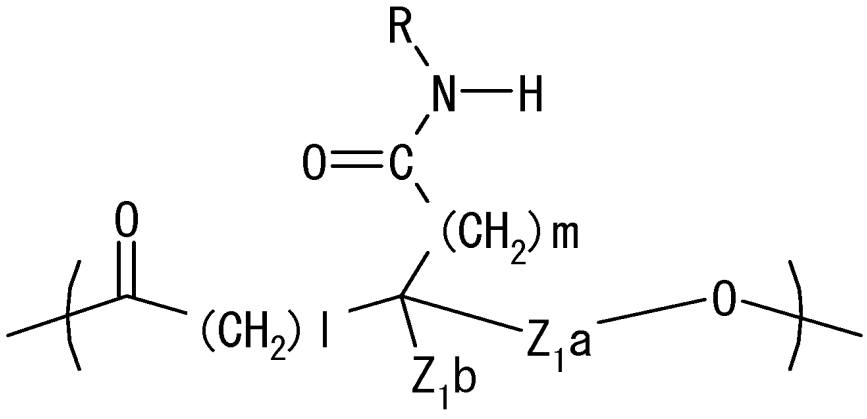
IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 5 and 11 to 15 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Please amend the claims as shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) A charge control agent for controlling a charged state of powder, ~~characterized by~~ comprising one or more units each represented by the following chemical formula (1) in a molecule:



(in the formula:

R represents $-A_1-SO_2R_1$;

R_1 represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{1a};

R_{1a} and A_1 each independently represent a group having a substituted or unsubstituted aliphatic hydrocarbon structure, a substituted or unsubstituted aromatic ring structure, or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic structure; and

wherein l is an integer selected from 0 to 4;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{1a}, and Z_{1b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{1a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{1a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

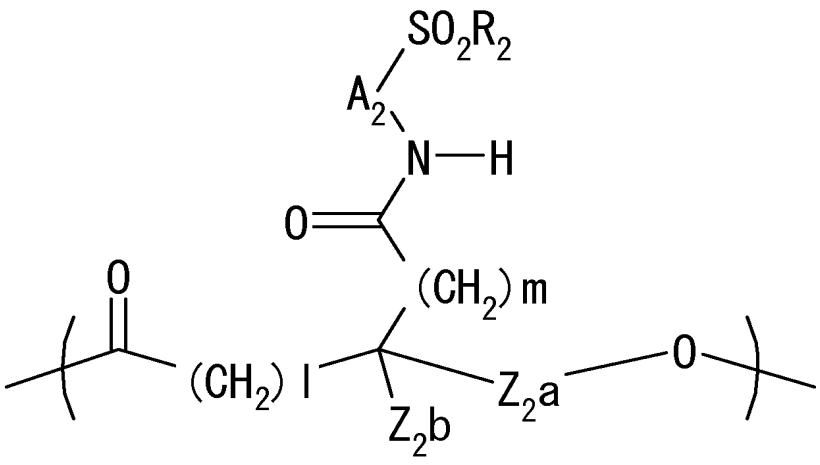
when l represents 1 and Z_{1a} represents nothing, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{1a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{1a} represents nothing, Z_{1b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R, R_1, R_{1a}, A_1, Z_{1a}, Z_{1b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

2. (Currently Amended) A charge control agent according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the one or more units each represented by the chemical formula (1) are each represented by the following chemical formula (2):



(in the formula:

R_2 represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{2a}; and

R_{2a} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group, and A_2 represents a linear or branched alkylene group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{2a}, and Z_{2b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{2a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{2a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

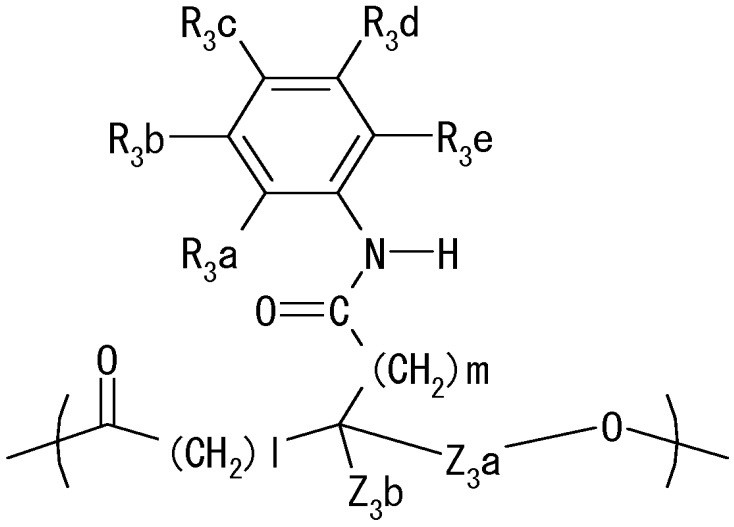
when l represents 1 and Z_{2a} represents nothing, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{2a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{2a} represents nothing, Z_{2b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_2, R_{2a}, A_2, Z_{2a}, Z_{2b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

3. (Currently Amended) A charge control agent according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the one or more units each represented by the chemical formula (1) are each represented by the following chemical formula (3):



(in the formula, at least one of R_{3a}, R_{3b}, R_{3c}, R_{3d}, and R_{3e} represents SO_2R_{3f} (R_{3f} represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{3f1}, R_{3f1} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group), and the others each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxy group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an OH group, an NH_2 group, an NO_2 group, $COOR_{3g}$ (R_{3g} represents an H atom, an Na atom, or a K atom), an acetamide group, an OPh group, an NHPh group, a CF_3 group, a C_2F_5 group, or a C_3F_7 group;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{3a}, and Z_{3b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{3a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{3a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

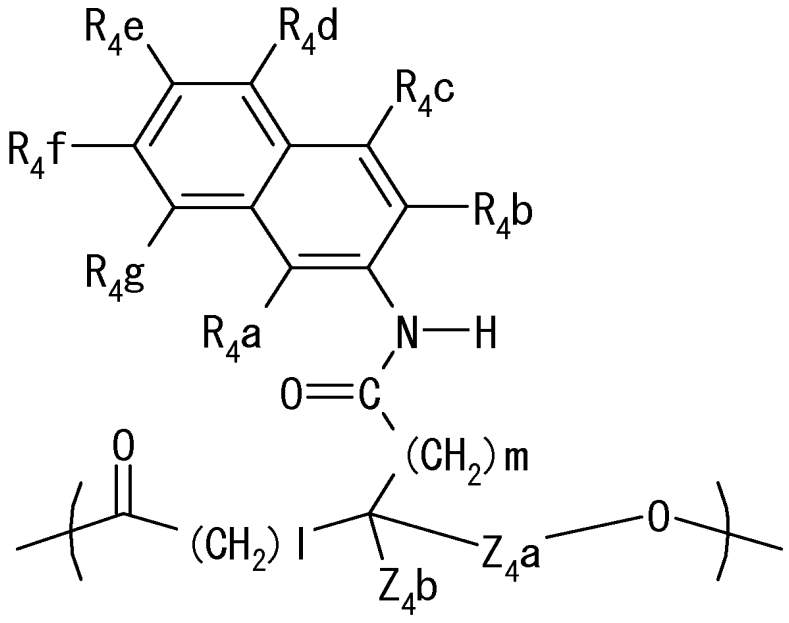
when l represents 1 and Z_{3a} represents nothing, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{3a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{3a} represents nothing, Z_{3b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_{3a}, R_{3b}, R_{3c}, R_{3d}, R_{3e}, R_{3f}, R_{3f1}, R_{3g}, Z_{3a}, Z_{3b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

4. (Currently Amended) A charge control agent according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the one or more units each represented by the chemical formula (1) are each represented by the following chemical formula (4A) or (4B):



(in the formula, at least one of R_{4a}, R_{4b}, R_{4c}, R_{4d}, R_{4e}, R_{4f}, and R_{4g} represents SO_2R_{4o} (R_{4o} represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{4o1}, R_{4o1} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group), and the others each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl

group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxy group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an OH group, an NH_2 group, an NO_2 group, $COOR_{4p}$ (R_{4p} represents an H atom, an Na atom, or a K atom), an acetamide group, an OPh group, an NHPh group, a CF_3 group, a C_2F_5 group, or a C_3F_7 group;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{4a}, and Z_{4b} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{4a} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

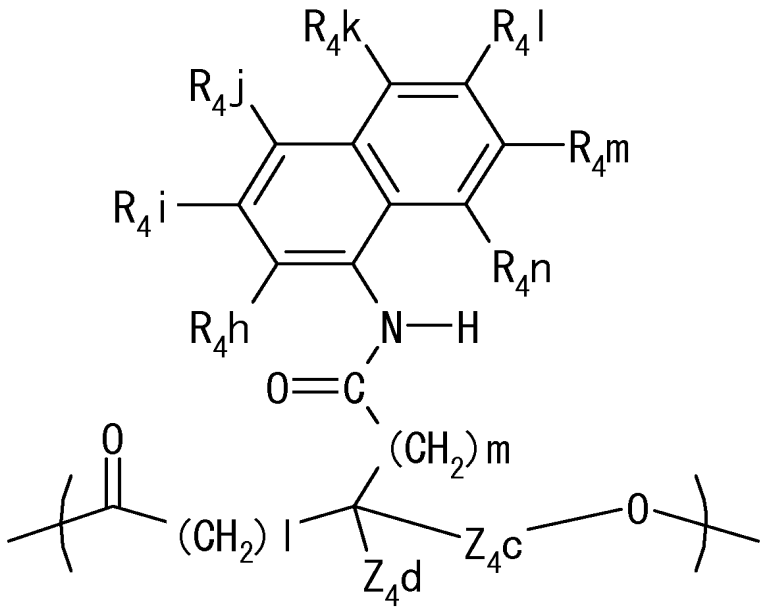
when l represents 1 and Z_{4a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{4a} represents nothing, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

when l represents 0 and Z_{4a} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{4a} represents nothing, Z_{4b} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_{4a}, R_{4b}, R_{4c}, R_{4d}, R_{4e}, R_{4f}, R_{4g}, R_{4o}, OR_{4o1}, R_{4p}, Z_{4a}, Z_{4b}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit)



(in the formula, at least one of R_{4h}, R_{4i}, R_{4j}, R_{4k}, R_{4l}, R_{4m}, and R_{4n} represents SO_2R_{4o} (R_{4o} represents OH, a halogen atom, ONa, OK, or OR_{4o1}, R_{4o1} represents a linear or branched alkyl group having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, or a substituted or unsubstituted phenyl group), and the others each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxy group having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an OH group, an NH_2 group, an NO_2 group, $COOR_{4p}$ (R_{4p} represents an H atom, an Na atom, or a K atom), an acetamide group, an OPh group, an NHPh group, a CF_3 group, a C_2F_5 group, or a C_3F_7 group;

in addition, with regard to l, m, Z_{4c}, and Z_{4d} in the formula:

when l represents an integer selected from 2 to 4, Z_{4c} represents nothing or a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{4c} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

when l represents 1 and Z_{4c} represents nothing, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom and m represents 0;

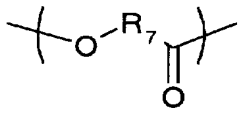
when l represents 0 and Z_{4c} represents a linear alkylene chain having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, the linear alkylene chain may be substituted by a linear or branched alkyl group, or an alkyl group containing a residue having any one of a phenyl structure, a thienyl structure, and a cyclohexyl structure at a terminal thereof, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8; and

when l represents 0 and Z_{4c} represents nothing, Z_{4d} represents a hydrogen atom, or a linear or branched alkyl group, aryl group, or aralkyl group which may be substituted by an aryl group, and m represents an integer selected from 0 to 8;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_{4h}, R_{4i}, R_{4j}, R_{4k}, R_{4l}, R_{4m}, R_{4n}, R_{4o}, OR_{4o1}, R_{4p}, Z_{4c}, Z_{4d}, l, and m each independently have the above meaning for each unit.)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A charge control agent according to claim 1, ~~characterized by~~ further comprising a unit represented by the following chemical formula (7) in a molecule:



(7)

(in the formula, R_7 represents a linear or branched alkylene group having 1 to 11 carbon atoms, an alkyleneoxyalkylene group each alkylene of which has 1 to 2 carbon atoms, or an alkylidene group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms which may be substituted by aryl as desired;

in addition, when multiple units exist, R_7 independently has the above meaning for each unit.)

7. (Previously Presented) A charge control agent according to claim 1, wherein the powder comprises toner for developing an electrostatic charge image.

8. (Currently Amended) A toner for developing an electrostatic charge image, ~~characterized by~~ comprising at least:

a binder resin;

a colorant; and

the charge control agent according to claim 1.

9. (Previously Presented) An image forming method, comprising at least the steps of:

applying a voltage from an outside to a charging member to charge an electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

forming an electrostatic charge image on the charged electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

developing the electrostatic charge image with the toner of claim 8 for developing an electrostatic charge image to form a toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

transferring the toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member onto a recording material; and

fixing the toner image on the recording material under heating.

10. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus, comprising at least:

means for applying a voltage from an outside to a charging member to charge an electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for forming an electrostatic charge image on the charged electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for developing the electrostatic charge image with the toner of claim 8 for developing an electrostatic charge image to form a toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member;

means for transferring the toner image on the electrostatic latent image-bearing member onto a recording material; and

means for fixing the toner image on the recording material under heating.

11 to 15. (Cancelled)